In the Claims

1. (currently amended) A method of treating ~~weight loss due to underlying disease~~ cachexia in a patient, the method comprising administering to the patient an effective amount of an agent which reduces sympathetic nervous system activity.

2. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 1 wherein the agent which reduces sympathetic nervous system activity is selected from the group consisting of: a compound which inhibits the effect of aldosterone; a chymase inhibitor; a cathepsin inhibitor; a β receptor blocker; an imidazoline receptor antagonist; a centrally acting α receptor antagonist; a peripherally acting α receptor antagonist; a ganglion blocking agent; an opiate; scopolamine; endothelin receptor antagonist; a xanthine oxidase inhibitor; and erythropoietin.

3. (previously presented) The method according to claim 2 wherein the compound which inhibits the effect of aldosterone is an aldosterone antagonist.

4. (previously presented) The method according to Claim 3 wherein the aldosterone antagonist is selected from the group consisting of spironolactone, testolactone, RU40555, RU26752, canrenoate, eplerenone, 3-(17β-hydroxy-3-oxoandrosta-1,4,6,11-tetraen-17α-yl) propionic acid γ lactone, 3-(9-α-fluoro-17 β -hydroxy-3-oxo-androsta-4-en-17 α -yl) propionic acid γ lactone, dihydro-spirorenone, spirorenone, 15,16-methylene derivatives of spironolactone, mespirenone and SC9420.

5. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The method of claim 1 ~~of treating weight loss due to underlying disease in a patient the method~~ comprising administering to the patient an effective amount of a chymase inhibitor.

6. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The method according to Claim 5 wherein the chymase inhibitor is selected from the group consisting of alendronate, aprotinin and tissue inhibitors of matrix metalloproteinases.

7. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The method of claim 1 comprising administering to the patient an effective amount of a cathepsin inhibitor.

8. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The method according to Claim 7 wherein the cathepsin B inhibitor is selected from the group consisting of CA-074 or E64-c, stefin A and cystatin C.

9. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The method of claim 1 comprising administering to the patient an effective amount of a β receptor blocker.

10. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The method according to Claim 9 wherein the β receptor blocker is selected from the group consisting of acebutolol, alprenolol, atenolol, betaxolol, bisoprolol, carteolol, celiprolol, esmolol, labetolol, lavobunolol, metipranolol, metoprolol, nadolol, oxprenolol, penbutolol, pindolol, propanolol, sotalol, timolol, nebivolol, carvedilol and bucindolol.

11. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The method of claim 1 comprising administering to the patient an effective amount of an imidazoline receptor antagonist.

12. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The method according to Claim 11 wherein the imidazoline receptor antagonist is selected from the group consisting of moxonidine, rilmenidine, pentamidine and α-methyl dopa.

13. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The method of claim 1 comprising administering to the patient an effective amount of ~~an imidazoline~~ a centrally acting α receptor antagonist.

14. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The method according to Claim 13 wherein the centrally acting α receptor agonist is clonidine.

15. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The method of claim 1 comprising administering to the patient an effective amount of a peripherally acting α receptor antagonist.

16. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The method according to Claim 15 wherein the peripherally acting α receptor antagonist is selected from the group consisting of doxazosin, prazosin, terazosin and ipsapirone.

17. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The method of claim 1 ~~of treating weight loss due to underlying disease in a patient the method~~ comprising administering to the patient an effective amount of a ganglion blocking agent.

18. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The method according to Claim 17 wherein the ganglion blocking agent is selected from the group consisting of azamethonium, dicolinium, hexamethonium, mecamylamine, pentamethonium, pentolinium, trimetaphan, benzohexonium, hexafluorenium, cypenam, trimethaphan canfosulfonate, tetraethylammonium bromide and synapleg.

19. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the drug reduces sympathetic nervous system activity by affecting cardiovascular reflexes.

20. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The method of claim 1 comprising administering to the patient an effective amount of an opiate.

21. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The method according to Claim 20 wherein the opiate is selected from the group consisting of dihydrocodeine, morphine, diamorphine and buprenorphine.

22. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The method of claim 1 comprising administering to the patient an effective amount of scopolamine.

23. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The method of claim 1 comprising administering to the patient an effective amount of an endothelin receptor antagonist.

24. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The method according to Claim 23 wherein the ET-1 receptor antagonist is selected from the group consisting of butenolide, BQ123, BQ-788, A-216546, ABT-627, IRL3461, LU135252, S-0139, T-0201, PD 142,893, PD 164333, RO 61-1790, PD 156,707, SB 209670, IRL 1038 and WS-7338 B.

25. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The method of claim 1 comprising administering to the patient an effective amount of a xanthine oxidase inhibitor.

26. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The method according to Claim 25 wherein the xanthine oxidase inhibitor is selected from the group consisting of allopurinol, 7,8-dihydroneopterin, 5,6,7,8-tetrahydrobiopterin, leukopterin, xanthopterin, neopterin, biopterin, 4-amino-6-hydroxypyrazolo[3,4-d]pyrimidine (AHPP) and oxypurinol.

27. (currently amended) ~~A~~ The method of claim 1 comprising administering to the patient an effective amount of erythropoietin.

28. (cancelled).

29. (currently amended) The method according to claim 1 wherein the cachexia results from an underlying disease ~~is~~ selected from the group consisting of AIDS, liver cirrhosis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease with or without emphysema, chronic renal failure, chronic infections, cancer, heart disease including hypertension and chronic heart failure.

30. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1 wherein the patient has idiopathic cachexia.

31. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1 wherein the underlying disease is chronic heart failure and the patient has cardiac cachexia.

Claims 32-47. (cancelled).